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Two Unpublished Eyewitness Accounts of the Holocaust of Smyrna, September 1922

HOVAKIM UREGIAN and
KRIKOR BAGHDJIAN

NOTE: In September, 1922 with the collapse of the Greek Army at the second Battle of the Sakaria, the insurgent forces of Mustafa Kemal Pasha entered the great cosmopolitan city of Smyrna, on the western coastline of Asia Minor. Atrocities committed on the Greek and Armenian populations of the enclave were accompanied by a massive fire that ruined most especially the Christian quarters of the city. At the same time, tragic scenes ensued as the terrified Christian population of Smyrna attempted to board Allied and other craft in port waters for deliverance from the animal wrath of the Kemalist soldiery. Here, two Armenian eyewitnesses and survivors of the Smyrna massacre and holocaust tell their stories, as translated by G. Armen, an urban researcher and designer, of Ottawa, Canada. He says, "Both Hovakim Uregian and Krikor Baghdjian have now passed away. Uregian died in 1964, victim of a tragic near-accident. He had apparently saved himself from being run over by a truck at a pedestrian crossing but he died within a few days of internal injuries. Krikor Baghdjian died at the age of 78, in 1982. Their memories are dearly held by an Armenian family formed by the marriage of Hovakim's elder son and Krikor's elder daughter, now living with their three children in Canada. The names of their children: Marie, Haig and Krikor. . ."

I. SMYRNA DIARY, 1922

Memories of an Armenian eyewitness

HOVAKIM UREGIAN

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

The events described in these memoirs happened some sixty years ago, in September 1922, in what is now Izmir (Smyrna), Turkey. The writer, HOVAKIM UREGIAN was born in 1900 and he was an orphaned survivor of the Armenian massacres of 1915, while he was on his way from Cilicia, in Southern Turkey, to the United States, where relatives were expecting him.

When he stopped temporarily at Izmir, the city was known as Smyrna and it was occupied by Greek forces under a mandate granted by the victorious Allied Powers Britain, France, and Italy. By reason of rivalries between them, these Powers could not agree on peace terms with Turkey which, as an ally of Germany and Austria, had been defeated in World War I. Exploiting the rivalries and indecision of the Allied Powers, Mustapha Kemal, the Turkish hero of the Gallipoli campaign in 1915, had rebelled against the legitimate government of Turkey. Advancing westwards, he made a pact with France and obtained the entire territory of Cilicia in exchange for some commercial privileges and monopolies. These memoirs begin at a time when Kemal was rapidly advancing on the Greeks and Smyrna.

G. ARMEN

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1922

In 1921, when the French evacuated Cilicia after an occupation of two years as part of their World War I Armistice obligation, many Armenians departed with them. The Turkish Revolutionary Forces which occupied the area under the leadership of Mustapha Kemal had a policy of "Turkey for the Turks" - inherited from the regime of the young Turks - and no Armenian could hope to be spared by them.

A great many of the departing Armenians followed the French into Syria and Lebanon, but some headed west in a ship sailing to Smyrna. The Greek occupation of this city, as part of an agreement between Lloyd George and Elefterios Venizelos, made these Armenians hope for some form of continued existence near their fatherland, under a western and Christian government.

The ship was kept in the harbor unloaded for days because the Greek authorities asked for a guarantee that the immigrating Armenians would be given employment or maintained by the Smyrna Armenian community rather than becoming a burden on the government. I was in the committee selected to make representations to the Armenian Prelacy of Smyrna, and when the Archbishop responded positively to our request for sponsorship, I remember how every member of that committee felt gratified for having rendered a small service to our fellow passengers. Little did we know of the impending destruction of Smyrna.

The cosmopolitan character of Smyrna, its bustling port and geographical position between Occident and Orient, made it a safe refuge for Armenians during Turkey's occupation by the Allied forces. Many surrounding villages as well as the city itself offered fine economic opportunities for hard-working individuals. Long-established Armenians in the area had become prosperous and looked forward to a new era of fair government and freedom from persecution following the defeat of Ottoman Turkey. Unfortunately, peace-loving, hard-working and trusting Armenians have often behaved like a naive flock of sheep, unable to foresee impending disasters. I believe it was a scientist who likened a crowd to a collection of unthinking babies. Foresight may be a talent given to a very fortunate few, but political foresight has certainly proved rare in individuals let alone in crowds or nations.

The political situation of Smyrna was certainly unusual, to say the least. Here was the Greek army with a mandate from the Allies to pursue the Turkish Revolutionary Forces, because they were placing in jeopardy the legitimate Government of Turkey [in Constantinople] the signatory of the Treaty of Sevres, nearly two years earlier. The Greeks were doing their best to appear a neutral policing force, but two of the Allies - Italy and France - had rival claims on the south and southwestern coasts of Turkey. Though little was known at the time, these two had been secretly negotiating with Mustapha Kemal and arming him with their latest weapons to fight the Greeks. Thus, while the Greeks had successfully pursued Kemal at first and reached the Zacharia River deep in Anatolia, suddenly reversal of their fortunes had taken place. The newspaper in Smyrna had concealed the truth and continued to praise the "military victories" of the Greek army. Even in the last days of August, 1922, the papers were printing deliberate lies about the situation, but a whisper spread among the people to the effect that the Greek army had been shattered and the pursuing Kemalist regulars and irregulars (the "Tchete") were now marching on Smyrna. Panic spread among all Christians in the city and as refugees

arrived from eastern villages burned down by the Turks, desperation reigned. People abandoned their jobs or shops, boarded just about any size boat, paid just about any price to get out to the nearby Greek islands.

A couple of friends and I came down to the port from our suburb in order to survey the situation and report to the Armenian community. We saw all the boatmen accept passengers on payment of exorbitant fares and without bothering about travel documents. In our idealistic and optimistic approach to life, we considered this type of panicky action as unworthy of our people. We thought that brave and independent action was the honorable way out.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1922

Today, thousands of Armenians, gathering their most valuable belongings, congregated at the Armenian Church of St. Stephens. The courtyard, the church, the adjoining rooms, the entire Prelacy was filled with people. In retrospect, I can't help felling that this herding of self-defense was the best arrangement for the butcher -- the Turks.

The entire day the gathering crowd kept talking and walking about in great anxiety, but with no eagerness to organize some form of self-defense. Everything was superficially the same--the people, the buildings, the city, everything as it had been perhaps for the last 100 years. Where was the danger? Was there any need to re-organize things? As a form of reconnaissance a couple of friends and I set out towards the suburb where we lived at the time to gather some of our belongings. Hardly had we reached the Blasmahane Station when we heard some shooting. We saw some Greek soldiers firing incredibly on other Greek soldiers! When we asked what was going on, we were given the equally incredible explanation-under the circumstances-that "Royalists were firing on Democrats". When our eyes got accustomed to this stupid scene, we considered the event just about the most informative piece of reconnaissance and we started on our way back to the Armenian transportation center, discussing the desperate situation of the Armenians. We had found a gun in one corner and we took it with us for protection. That night, the gates of the Prelacy building space were closed after we had got there.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1922

My friends and I set out for our reconnaissance as soon as the gates opened, marching towards the Quay along a route which might have to be defended, should the Armenian effort at self-defence prove unsuccessfull. We saw few people in the streets, few shops were open and a great many were appraising the situation from time to time. The port was quite a contrast however, as a large number of shops were to be seen, some anchored, most of them moving about. We counted twelve men-of-war carrying one or the other of the four Allied flags - British, French, American and Italian. Nearer the shore, dozens of tugboats and barges were carrying people and furniture westward, to the Greek islands.

We had just about finished our reconnaissance of the Quay when suddenly we saw some panic on the east side. There was certainly no shooting, but people were running away, some of them diving into the sea, most of them shouting that the Kemalist forces were coming. Some ran into shops with others and pulled down the shutters for safety.

After a while, holding our breath and listening in terror, we heard the sounds of approaching cavalry. The trotting of horses continued. They passed by the shop in which we were hiding and we drew a breath of relief. More cavalry kept passing and, as we opened the shutters, we saw them advancing in the direction of Konak, in the Turkish quarter of Smyrna. The last horsemen were shouting "Korkma, korkma, ["Have no fear"], and more and more shutters were opening in response. We came out of the shop to watch the infantry which was following the cavalry. It was a very strange collection of troops. There was certainly no uniform common to these "soldiers" and their guns were hanging from their shoulder with a piece of rope. The commonest feature was the 'shalwar' an oriental pantaloons reaching the knees and I heard the troops being referred to as "Zeibaks". Behind the Turkish infantry we saw a large number of Greek prisoners in miserable condition. Their boots had been taken from them and all the signs of hunger, exhaustion and torture by forced march under the sun, could be seen on those unfortunate prisoners. Their clothing and their faces were lowered in shame. This passing parade of cavalry, troops and some 5-6 hundred prisoners took about an hour and more people gathered to watch in silence. At the very end of the parade, a British manufactured armored car appeared with the following notice posted on its sides in Turkish: "Have no fear, there is no danger, continue your work as normal".

The British armored car and the notice completely deceived people into thinking that the Turk's intention was to capture the city without violence. The scene by the seaside was also reassuring as some French sailors had just brought ashore a number of half-drowned people on barges and they were busy reviving them. Thinking that the climax of the day was over, my friends and I returned to the Armenian Prelacy to report the events. The deadly silence of the streets on our return journey made us feel very uneasy and worried, despite all the notices I had read at the parade. A friend of ours who returned separately later had witnessed the murder of a man in cold blood with a knife used by a Zeibak. He had escaped in horror only to see more murders on his way. Turkish troops were attacking individual houses, he said, killing the residents and looting in broad daylight.

The gates of the Armenian Prelacy were closed firmly that night and the people waited in horror, unable to sleep; they talked for self-defence and the depressed murmur approaching exaggeration was only despiriting everybody.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1922

We all spent a sleepless night, huddled next to our belongings in small groups of families and friends. Turkish soldiers in increasing numbers could be heard all around the wall of the Prelacy, shouting threats and firing guns, running around like packs of wolves, stopping every Christian passer-by, asking for his money and valuables. Invariably a scream followed each interrogation and the soul-tearing quality of these screams left little doubt as the fate of the victims.

At dawn we placed mirrors in positions that could afford a view of the events outside -- next to doors and windows -- and we watched in horror what I can only describe as a real picture of hell.

Groups of regular or irregular (Tchete) Turkish troops would knock on a door and proceed to break it down. Any young girls found inside would be brought out and taken to some shop nearby or across the street by two or three soldiers. Screams would follow and occasionally a gunshot. As the light of the day increased the Turks

started using their swords to avoid making much noise while killing their victims. Gunfire could be heard from all over the city. We could hardly see a corner or door in the street without a pile of victims nearby. Thousands of people were meeting a horrible death under the scimitar, knife or gun of the Tchete Turks.

And finally, at long last, I heard and saw some preparation for self-defence inside the Prelacy. We counted all the males and singled out all those who had some experience in using a gun. Some 150 guns were issued to men-just about all we had available- and we rationed out the meager supply of bullets. The few hand-grenades that were also available were taken by those who had not been able to get a gun. Suddenly, I was in charge of my own destiny and I left determined to get a high price for my soul. What a pity that the guns had been so late in the course of all this, when we were already besieged.

I joined a few friends, with guns or hand-grenades and we were assigned the defence of the rear door of the Prelacy. We took positions in the nearest room above the door, pointed our guns at the street and agreed that we would fire only if necessary, only if the Turks tried to break down the door. As soon as our rifles stuck out of the windows however, the Turks started to empty the street and there was no need to fire at all. We listened to our leader's instructions as to who should do what and we divided the shifts for guard duty. Thus, we had a chance to sleep for a few hours, but I, for one, slept very little.

There was little or no action in the morning and we spent most of the time talking and training under a leader by the name of Garabed Chavoosh. The nights were spent without sleep, even when I was not on guard duty.

In the morning, a rather suspect group of uniformed soldiers marched to the rear door of the Prelacy and their officer in charge shouted in English. "We have come to liberate and defend you, open the door".

Garabed Chavoosh immediately suspected a "Kids and the wolf" game - by virtue of the fact that they had come to the rear door of the Prelacy and by the way the words had been spoken. Our interpreter had recognized a Turkish accent in the message, he admitted, but he naively believed the intention was genuine. He was able to persuade Father Avak to go and locate the key of the door and convey his instructions to the officer waiting below.

While this was going on, Garabed Chavoosh ordered us to take positions behind suitable windows and furniture, ready to fire in case "the game turned foul". We held our breath and waited for some 15-20 minutes before Der Avak returned and told us "The key to this door had been found". The soldiers waiting below did not appear to understand this answer, but the officer became nervous and shouted an order in Turkish, whereupon all of them threw hand-grenades over the wall of the Prelacy and started running away. We all fired from our positions of hiding, but the explosions caused real havoc inside the Prelacy. A grenade exploded somewhere near me and for a second I thought I was seeing stars. A horse standing near me seemed to jump into the air and then fall flat on all fours. I touched my limbs to make sure I had not been hurt, and I jumped to run towards a corner to be safer. Looking back, I saw a lame person, barely half a meter from where I had been hiding when the grenade exploded, now moaning and shouting that he had been hit. I summoned help for him and when I was sure he was in good hands I ran upstairs to join my friends who were firing at the Turks. I now realized that the party of

"English" soldiers was an elaborate trap, involving hundreds and hundreds of Turkish regulars and *Tchetes* who had surrounded the entire Prelacy. A machine gun somewhere outside the walls was shattering all high windows and hitting quite a number of my compatriots. There was a terrible panic inside the Prelacy as nearly 5,000 people - a number we were able to verify after counting our dead, following this ambush - were screaming and shouting. The attack lasted not more than half an hour, I would say, but in the heat of the action my sense of time may well have left me.

What marked the end of the attack was an order from Garabed Chavoosh that we all fire a shot, one after the other, just to show our strength to the Turks and pretend that we had inexhaustible ammunition for our guns. . !

Silence fell and people huddled together waiting for hostilities to start anew, but there was no further action that day. Food was distributed - thank God we seemed to have plenty of that - and everybody had a good ration. Few, however, had the appetite to eat much during those days of terror and suspense.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1922

I spent another of those sleepless nights. More cows, sheep and even some horses had to be killed to provide satisfactory rations.

A hole in the wall of a shop looking into the market provided opportunities for cautious dialogue with the Turks. The general tone of these conversations was a reassuring plea by the Turks that "No evil would befall if all the besieged gave up this silly fight". Nobody could however trust individual Turks and the dialogues continued as a ritual.

On Friday a highly placed Turkish official wearing a red fez asked to be allowed in, "unarmed and in peace", in order to make a speech and explain the objectives of the new regime. He was allowed to climb up the high balcony from where he was able to survey every corner of the besieged Prelacy, I suspect, and the people were encouraged to come and listen. Speaking in spirited terms, he announced the conquest of Smyrna by the Revolutionary Forces, the equality before the law of all Turkish subjects including Armenians, and the necessity of reorganizing and supporting the newly established Kemalist Government. The people started to applaud, pretending consent, I thought, but as enthusiasm appeared to increase, I was horrified to confirm that they were genuinely weighing the message of the speaker. "There goes the herd of sheep", I thought in disgust. They appeared eager to get out of this siege, regardless of the consequences.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1922

Today a French priest and 12 armed sailors came into the Armenian Prelacy and offered to guide the besieged Armenians, under their protection, to the Quay. Several questions had to be answered by the priest - the people started referring to him as "Monpere" (my father) - and, subsequently, a meeting was held by the Armenian leaders.

The principal conditions for a free passage to the Quay included the abandonment of all our armor inside the Prelacy and an inspection of every evacuee at the gate. The Armenians asked for more French sailors to protect the crowd, once the Armenian fighters had been disarmed. They also asked for two French sailors to be present during the inspection of every evacuee by the Turks.

The Armenian leaders appeared to be informed also about the impending burning down of the entire Armenian quarter of Smyrna through the use of petroleum barrel. Their final decision was to hold a verbal plebiscite, to consult the people, asking first for a "No" shout from dissenters and subsequently for a "Yes" shout from consenters. To my surprise and disgust, the great majority voted to evacuate the Prelacy - a decision which I failed to understand at the time, as we had plenty of food and we had the upper hand in the fighting. After seeing the subsequent burning of the Armenian, Greek and European quarters of the city, however, I gained some faith in the ultimate wisdom of the people to be evacuated from the Prelacy.

When the gate was finally opened and the evacuation started, only a few Turkish soldiers appeared to carry out the physical inspection. At first they pretended to look for arms but if they found a watch or some other valuable object, they would try to pocket it while the overseeing French sailor was looking in some other direction. Some Armenians in the crowd started objecting and complaining to the sailors in French and the Turks started to behave. Later however, they brought more soldiers and Tchetes "to help in the search for arms", only to make matters more difficult for the overseeing two sailors. The stealing of valuable objects kept increasing and the poor French sailors could not protect every evacuee. We therefore arranged for a male to accompany each female evacuee to provide her some protection. In order to increase the flow through the gates, we also advised everyone to prepare some sort of "gift" for the Turk; but as the crowd in the Prelacy was getting less and less, the Turks were getting greedier, tougher and more violent and unreasonable. Even the shoes were now considered "potentially offensive weapons" and the last few to come out, I learned from eyewitnesses, were allowed through with barely their pants and shirts on them. I managed to get somewhere near the middle of the long waiting line and I got through with a suitcase intact, though I had to yield my rifle, because it was too long to fit inside that suitcase.

The march to the Quay was quite an adventure because the number of French sailors was inadequate to protect a crowd of nearly 5,000 from the marauding Turks. We organized an entourage of males all around the crowd, but on every corner and on every turn, armed Turks, looking like a pack of wolves, would start firing and mencing, asking for valuables and young girls. As we were unarmed we could only push them away and call for the French sailors. The poor "Monpere" was running all around, reproaching the Turks and exposing himself to real danger, in defense of a crowd who were not even his flock. I do not know how many of the 5,000 made it to Quay, but I hope history will record the bravery of that lone French priest who helped save so many lives. . .

Our destination was the French Embassy, but it was soon filled up and the rest of our group walked over to the Italian Embassy. Nearby schools were also used, but the great majority had to find a place along the Quay. Any foreign flag or sign was a valuable symbol to hold above a group of people, to discourage attacks by the continuously harassing and marauding Turks. Thousands of Christians were huddled against walls of the Quay, looking for boats to carry them to some foreign ship out in the bay. In one section of the Quay I was surprised to see some Turkish and Circassian families sharing the same fate with us and a friend of mine informed me that these were people who had opted to remain loyal to the legal government

of Turkey (Constantinople). Some courage, I thought, here were some people with principles.

I also saw some revolutionary Turks in civilian clothing, circulating among the people at the Quay, finding this or that person and setting some old score with the latter by killing him in cold blood. Life had become so worthless on that Quay, I couldn't believe my eyes.

As I was wondering how to protect myself against so many odds in the place, I saw some of my compatriots form the Prelacy - including a highly placed official - walking with no shoes and wearing just shirts and their pants. They had obviously been among the last evacuees and as I was approaching them, I saw a group of Turkish soldiers looking in their directions and saying words to the effect that they were going to "deal a lesson to this bunch tonight". I realized that the Turks were seething for revenge against the defenders of the Armenian Prelacy, and the shirt-plus-pants "uniform" in which they had left the last evacuees would mark all of us for execution that night. I therefore continued to walk and as I passed my compatriots, I nodded to them to follow me. When I felt that the Turks had lost our trail, I turned and told my friends all I had heard and suspected. We all agreed that the people had to be informed as soon as possible to disperse among other groups to avoid a massacre.

After informing a number of Armenians about the situation, I managed to find a good hiding place for my suitcase and subsequently I turned towards the city. Time was running short and decisive action was needed. Gathering all my courage I started to walk with a confident pace, determined to survive the night, no matter what happened. I walked through some streets which were totally unknown to me and disregarded all Turks on my way, as though I had an important mission to carry out. I saw a crowd at the entrance of a courtyard and walked right through the people and into the courtyard. There were old buildings all around and all the people were Greek: I mixed with them and nobody seemed to mind so I decided to spend the night in that courtyard.

A little later I was delighted to meet Haig, an old friend from my village, whom I had not seen since the forced deportation march in 1915, when the Turks exiled the entire population of my dear Tomarza. Though I called it my "village", it was in fact, a little town some 10,000 strong, all Armenian, devoutly Christian and just about the most hard-working people I have ever known. We talked about the old days, the famous convent of St. Astvadzadzin, the schools, the churches, the local traditions and our famous dishes. A whole culture had disappeared for ever by virtue of a cruel genocide to "solve the Armenian Question by getting rid of the Armenians", as the Red Sultan of Turkey, Hamid II, had resolved. After killing some 400,000 between 1894 and 1908, he had been deposed by the Young Turks, whose plitical leaders did not, however, forget his notorious advise. As soon as the European Powers were at each other's throat in World War I, the extreme nationalist party of the Young Turks, the Committee of Union and Progress, ordered the wholesale deportation and systematic extermination of all Armenians. I was barely 15 at the time and Haig was about 13. We remembered how the Turks had collected the 400 notable Armenians of the town on February 9, 1915 - all the physicians, teachers, businessmen, tradesmen, all the men of letters and industry - and had tortured them to reveal hiding places for arms. Our people were too naive to have collected arms, however, and there were no hiding places to be revealed. As the

torture continued and some of the notables died, the townspeople decided to go and buy some arms and give them to the Turks, in order to save their compatriots. Instead of freeing the notables as they had promised, the Turks took the arms as evidence of guilt and carried the prisoners to Caesarea to try them at Court Marial - and we never saw them again.

Early in the war, the Turks had conscripted all our fathers and elder brothers - all males between 18 and 45 - ostensibly "to serve the Ottoman fatherland", but in reality to disappear forever behind a hill near the town. In the summer, the Turks had collected all the remaining males and placed them under guard, in readiness for the forced march. Finally, on August 23, 1915, they had ordered all the women and children to collect their belongings within two days, then fall into line and march. . . march all the way to the scorching Syrian desert of Deir-er-Zor. As the long line of refugees was passing by the convent of St. Asdvadzadzin, a Turkish religious official had appeared on the bell tower and as an ultimate form of contempt for the Christian faith of the Armenians, had started to read the Koran. This had brought tears and indignation to many women on the march, but with no able-bodied males in their ranks, they could do nothing.

This was only the first of dozens of incidents on the long march - attacks, theft, the kidnapping of young children to be brought up as Turks in orphanages, and the cruel rape of hundreds of women had followed. Many of these desperate women had committed suicide by throwing themselves into the Euphrates, others had been sold as concubines for the harem and literally thousands had died of hunger, physical torture and infectious disease. Barely 350-400 families - or rather remnants of families - out of a population of 10,000 - had survived the long march and continual harassment by the Turks. And here we were, two surviving orphans of Tomarza trying to survive a second massacre in Smyrna.

We slept rather late that night, telling each other the adventures of our survival over the last seven years. I told him of my return to Cilicia and Tomarza after the defeat of Turkey in 1918 and how I had tried to open a court case against the Turkish family that had occupied my parents' home. I had little money however and day after day in that Turkified Tomarza, so abhorrent to my eyes, became a torture to me. After a couple of weeks in that dirty, poor little village that Tomarza had become, I could not stand the stench, the shame and the indignation. I visited the nearby village of Tavlasoon, where, to my great surprise, I found some thirty Armenian families spared from the deportation, thanks to the support they enjoyed of the Turkish majority of the village.

Repeated attempts by visiting Government officials had not persuaded the local Turks. So the Government had reacted with strict measures to limit Christian worship, the teaching of Armenian to the young and the prohibition of Armenian as the language to be spoken at home or community gatherings. I could foresee the complete assimilation of that tiny community of Tavlasoon and it became evident to me, that even if I won the court case and got back my family home, I would be simply condemning myself and my descendants to assimilation with the Turks. Sadly, therefore I had decided to leave my home town for ever, to go and live among the Armenians of Cilicia.

Nevertheless, I do hope that the example of tavlasoon will be quoted by Armenian historians to prove to the world that if the majority of Turks had opposed the deportation orders of "The Committee of Union and Progress", that despicable

bunch of opportunistic scoundrels who had led Turkey to defeat and bankruptcy, no physical harm would have befallen the Armenian. The responsibility for the massacre of Armenians in 1915-1916 lies, therefore, on the Turkish people as a whole, because their vast majority revelled in the torture and bloodbath of Armenians and willingly shared in the pillage of their property and usurpation of their land.

Every generation of Turks that continues to live on that land and refuses full compensation or restitution to Armenians, should be considered guilty as that of 1915 - a cause rather difficult to pursue, living through a second massacre and struggling to survive physically, let alone politically. All we had to do was to get out of Smyrna, get together as a national entity and continue to struggle for the recognition of the injustice done to Armenians through dirty politics, genocide and depopulation of our land.

Haig and I decided to stand by each other and for the following few days, we kept each other company and wandered around together, sleeping in a school showing the Italian flag, then in a building showing the French flag: any location that appeared to us to be safe from the Turks. We saw many other Armenians also wandering from building to building to avoid concentrations (of Armenians) and the wrath of the Turk.

Groups of Turks on the other hand, were also wandering like greedy vultures, killing people at will and kidnapping young women. God knows how many women were raped in Smyrna during those terrible days.

When I left the Quay for the safety of the city, together with my suitcase I had also got rid of my 'republican' hat, considering it rather dangerous to wander as a European. Now, as I felt the growing pressure of the Turkish vultures, I went to the other extreme I bought a red fez and found a lapel pin with Kemal's photograph. Wearing these, I still failed to look like a Turk, because the bone structure of my face was so far from resembling the Mongoloid Turkish facial structure. Walking in the street I always pretended to be hurrying to some destination so that nobody would get suspicious about my ethnicity. The name of the game was "survival". . .

I cannot recall in detail what sort of food we ate during those days and I always seemed to be thirsty. The number of times I felt terror and indignation at the sight of cold-blooded murder and rape is certainly beyond recall. But thousands of people went through the same experiences, their hearts beating under threats of their life, daughters or wives, while their property and belongings had long disappeared. Night after night people had to huddle together under walls or next to their bags, screaming whenever the Turks approached and struggling in vain when some girl was kidnapped. Many a father and mother met their death trying to defend the honor of their daughter.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1922

Today a column of fire and smoke was seen in the Basmahane area of the city and people started shouting that the city was burning. The flames were spreading at an incredible rate and people started pouring into the Quay and infecting everybody with panic. By some evil stroke of luck, a wind was pushing the fire towards the seashore and the people were being trapped between the sea and the fire - a vicious conspiracy of nature and geography against a desperate crowd of Christians. The

speed with which the fire was spreading was such that people had no time to gather their belongings. I suspected from this rapid spreading, the columns of black smoke and the frequent explosions that this was not a 'natural' fire. Indeed, people fleeing from the city confirmed to me that petroleum had been placed in barrels along various streets and Turkish soldiers had been sprinkling a good deal of oil over the houses.

People were now in full panic, not knowing which way to turn to save their lives. Tchete irregulars and armed Turkish civilians would appear from time to time to harrass them as they arrived at the Quay with their belongings. The Tchetes would steal bags and valuables or kidnap women, while in isolated corners they would murder people in cold blood. The entire city and the seashore avenue in particular had become a human slaughterhouse with hundreds of horrible scenes happening at the same time in an orgy of blood and fire. Years later now, as I recall the nightmare in its various details, I feel like challenging any horror movie-maker to produce that kind of hideous spectacle.

The most incredible part of this madness was the division of Muslims and Christians into a number opposing and self-centered camps. The Muslim side consisted of Kemalist revolutionaries - Turkish regulars, Kurdish cavalry, Tchete irregulars, local Turkish civilians, Circassian and Turks loyal to the government. The Christian side consisted of royalist and anti-royalist Greeks, Armenians, Italians, French, British and Americans. Political rivalries between the Allied Powers and the strategic genius of Kemal had resulted in his revolutionaries obtaining arms and support from the Italians and the French - who wanted to discourage the Greeks from any forays into Asia Minor - and diplomatic support from the Americans. Many of these allegiances were not known at the time and Armenians in particular would naively divide the opposing camps simply into Christian and Muslim.

I was flabbergasted for example, to see the French sailors oppose, with their bayonets, any Greeks trying to get onto the Quay, shouting at them "where is your (king) Constantine to save you?" The flames were approaching from the city, Turks on horseback were harrassing us from the rear and here were the French bayonets in front of us preventing us from getting unto the Quay to save ourselves from this situation of pure hell!

What was the purpose of trapping nearly half a million people - those who had made Smyrna the most thriving port in the Middle East - between fire and steel? Was it simply to please the Turks who had just been defeated in the Great War?

The crowd started to push the French and, shouting in indignation, broke through the cordon to reach the seashore. A different kind of terror awaited the people there. Scores of swollen bodies were floating about, others were being pulled onto the shore in halfdrowned condition, desperate people would jump into the sea holding a plank and others would simply try to swim to the warships out in the sea. I counted twelve warships in the dark and there must have been others too, all belonging to the Italians, French, British and Americans, - the "Christian Powers", which however, were now treating these desperate fellow Christians like dirt.

I have heard so many stories of people swimming from one warship to another, begging to be allowed to get aboard, only to be repeatedly thrown back! In desperation they would try to return ashore only to drown in exhaustion or to be shot by Turks firing from the Quay.

On hearing or witnessing such incidents I decided not to attempt this solution. I could just about swim and I knew how to rest at sea if I got tired; but rather than

meet a watery grave, I thought it preferable to die fighting on land. Haig agreed.

A British motor boat had just reached the Quay and was collecting British subjects to take them to a warship, while fireshots whistled around all the time. An American motor boat nearby was collecting children and supervisors of an orphanage and we tried to mix with them. As I approached the checking point, however, we saw that a number printed on a piece of paper was required of each entrant and as we could not procure one, we had to slip out of the line. We therefore walked along the Quay and found a wall where the crowd was thickest and there we threw ourselves down to get some rest.

We found it impossible to sleep, as all sorts of incidents shouts and cries kept us in continual alarm and terror. Whenever a male scream for help was heard, people in the Quay said that another theft and murder in cold blood had occurred. Smyrna Turks, I was told, had been given some old guns and they were roaming the streets near the Quay; looking for old enemies or just any prosperous-looking person to steal and kill - in hundreds if not thousands. And whenever some female cry was heard - which was more often the case - we all knew that another rape had taken place. Beams of powerful light from the warships at sea were turned onto the crowd, or wherever a shout or cry was heard; but no attempt whatsoever was made to help the victims or try to stop this orgy of crime.

It occurred to me that the Allies wanted to say, "we are here, we are witnessing all this," but their sailors were inspired by only one motivation, sordid voyeurism; because any witness, victim or participant of the conquest and destruction of Smyrna by Kemal's forces could amply testify that the so-called "Great Powers" of the day acted with no conscience, allowed no mercy and pursued just their greed - for land, for markets and for power over each other and over gullible small nations, which had placed so much faith in them. And nations which were less gullible - like the Turks - simply became the instrument in their hands. If one dared reveal this, or tried to reason with a Turkish soldier or Tchete, to the effect that he should not kill his fellow citizens, that we were all equal before the law and ultimately, before God, that we were all workers and brothers in this world and that there was little sense in killing each other for the sake of the "Powers", I fear that the response would simply be: "Get lost you infidel, I am carrying out what my Koran tells me, how dare you dishonor my faith by calling yourself my equal?". It takes a long time, perhaps a century, for all nations and people to accept the notion of equality.

I cannot help feeling that back at the dawn of history mankind could not have been divided into petty-minded nations ready to jump at each other's throat. By some quirk of evolution, people became aware of tribal divisions they developed a sense of territoriality and finally some 'wise' men or 'prophets' gave them religions. The intention was to raise the level of civilization, give man a conscience and a code of ethics - a laudable intention to be sure, except that it has backfired so far, by emphasising our differences rather than pointing out our similarities and making us behave like brothers to each other. I feel sure that the great majority of wars in history came about for one, or the other, or a combination of these three factors of nationality, territoriality and religion. These three factors have created such enormous prejudices among neighboring nations that it is difficult to see an end to hate and enmity. One wonders how many more millions of people will have to die before nations come to realize the stupidity of it all!

I have heard some hypocrites maintain that all these wars have been a blessing in disguise by helping to keep population at a level that could be fed with the resources available. I would rather believe the savants who maintain that if all the world's resources and technology were to be used for peaceful purposes, no less than 20 billion people could be maintained on the earth! In the meantime we have to live with war, hate and prejudice and those of us on the receiving end, have to survive. . .

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th, 1922

Daylight doesn't stop the Turks from continuing their looting and killing. There is a wild glow in their eyes as though Mohammed himself has given them a mission - to kill all Christians. And the Christians, despite their large number, are resigned to their role of the victim. No amount of torture, murder or rape seems to bring them to the point of saying "This far and no further", then conspire to attack on an armed Turk, get his gun and kill him. Just a few guns taken in this way could make the Turks realize that we are not just sheep and that we are determined to get a high price for our lives. I am sure quite a few people along the Quay must be thinking along these lines, but my Greek is very limited and very few Greeks speak any Armenian. We could communicate in Turkish, but the continual attacks of the Turks and the need to keep shifting to survive give us little opportunity to organize this sort of action.

Among the many rumors circulating on the Quay I heard about the heroic end of the Greek Archbishop Chrysostomos of Smyrna. I understand that the French had given him the opportunity to escape from this situation a few days ago but he had replied that his place was at the head of his flock and he had to do all he could to save his people. He had therefore presented himself to Kiazim Karabekir Pasha, one of the leading henchmen of Kemal and his right hand, in order to wish him welcome and attempt mediation. Kiazim had responded with anger and told the archbishop that "the people would judge him. He had him taken out onto the steps where the Turkish mob, far from being his people, had started to throw things at him, ridiculing and swearing at him and attempting despicable tortures and mutilations. Death had come slowly and painfully to deliver him from the cruel mob, which had continued to dishonor even his corpse. A tragic story, no doubt, but what I found even more painful was that even an incident like this had not incited his flock - to which he had been so loyal - to some sort of revolt or resistance. I did not witness a single attempt at self-defense and I felt pity to see Turkish irregulars who barely knew how to use a gun treat the Greeks like sheep - docile and incredibly tolerant creatures, prepared to undergo any torture or rape, to satisfy Turkish passions. Nearly 800 years of Turkish domination in Asia Minor had undoubtedly left its mark.

I also heard some painful stories about Greek prisoners of war. After the tragic dissolution of the Greek army, a substantial number of soldiers had managed to escape from Chesme - a town west of Smyrna - by boarding various Greek ships and warships under the leadership of General Plastiros. Another part had thrown away their military uniforms and guns in order to mix with refugees in Smyrna. This had provided the Turks with the pretext for searching anybody they pleased and collecting all males between 15 and 45 as prisoners of war. Quite a few thousand Greek and Armenian able bodied males had thus been taken as prisoners. And no matter what convention had been accepted internationally with respect to the

treatment of prisoners of war, the Turkish system had a cruelty of its own.

The prime purpose of this system, like many other Turkish operations since 1908, was to serve Pan Turanism and PanTurkism, the gospel put forward by the poet Ziya Gokalp. According to him, a Turanian empire encompassing all Turkish and Turkoman peoples from the Mediterranean to the Baikal, in Siberia, should be their goal and the first objective was a "Turkey for the Turks". The entire Christian population of Asia Minor - nearly 5 million Greeks and Armenians - was the victim of this policy, which was shamefully encouraged and exploited by the German Kaiser for the sake of his Berlin-Bagdad railway. All Armenians were uprooted from their homes to be resettled along the new railway line, while in reality they were harassed and decimated all the way, their children and women being taken to captivity and Turkified - God knows how many Armenian offspring of Turk and Armenian are to be found in the present generation of Turks. The men were not considered "suitable material for assimilation with the Turks" and should therefore be used for hard labor and torture until exhausted to death. Prisoners were the prime victims of this policy.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 1922

The city was practically burned down now and the Turks had spread the false rumor that the Armenians had been responsible for this gigantic arson. Moreover, in order to divide the mass of Greek and Armenian refugees by the Quay, they had offered a reward to anybody handing over, or revealing to the authorities the whereabouts of an Armenian. My background in Cilicia and more recently in defending the Armenian Prelacy against the Turks would make me a prime target, I thought, and would certainly endanger the life of anybody in my company. I therefore advised Haig to follow his own destiny, because under these conditions, we could certainly not be able to speak much, let alone speak Armenian to each other. We promised to look for each other on any ship taking us to safety, in Piraeus where I intended to go and even in America where I dreamed to set up my home and family.

Unfortunately, we were never to meet again, but our brotherly love and wanderings during those terrible days in Smyrna are among the dearest memories of my life, as witnessed by the fact that I named my second son after him. Prophetically perhaps, that son of mine died while still an infant and to defy fate, in which I have never believed anyway, I went on to name my third son "Haig" too!

Now alone, I left the Quay once more to go into the city, in order to mix with the crowds for safety. I went into the yard of a large school and barely had I put down my things, when an Armenian young man came over to greet me. He was with his mother and I could not recall them, but he said he had seen and admired me as a defender of the Prelacy during the siege. I looked around us and turned the conversation into Turkish, pointing out to them the danger of doing otherwise in view of the reward offered for the capture of Armenians. As we started to walk and talk in the yard, I perceived somebody following us, trying to overhear our conversation. He looked like a Greek, and knowing that black sheep could be found in every flock, I suggested to my young friend that we split, for the time being, to meet in the evening in safer circumstances.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1922

I had continued to stay in the school yard despite my instinctive urge to keep wandering for safety, mainly because my young friend's mother, a very sophisticated lady, born and bred in Smyrna, had provided me with excellent food and company. As a "small town boy", I felt rather inferior to her manners and I was certainly much younger than her, but something was undeniably blossoming between us, whether one read the spoken or body language.

This romance was cruelly interrupted by the sudden appearance of several Turkish soldiers this morning. They entered the school yard armed to the teeth and quickly took posts all around us, pushing the people to the center of the area. They appeared to be well-informed and the operation was certainly well-planned. One by one they gathered all males between 15 and 50 and started searching them for arms. When I was brought to the line of prisoners and searched, the guard saw the chain of my pocket watch, pulled it out and pocketed the piece saying: "This sort of thing does not become you!" All valuables were taken from the prisoners with similar derogatory remarks, in which the Turks seemed to be well-versed, after days of thieving and boastful joking among themselves.

Some 300 of us were taken prisoners that morning and ordered to march double-file towards some unknown destination. As we passed through the streets, I couldn't help reflecting on the ghost of a city that Smyrna had become. All the buildings had been reduced to ugly, formless masses of black walls pointing accusing fingers to the sky, while the stench of burned horses, animals and people - by the hundreds in any view of a street - made it a veritable experience of hell. Curious, I thought, how we had come to think of hell as an inferno of fire and blood, but totally neglected the continuous torture to the human mind that the stench of burned flesh, human flesh in particular, could cause. It was absolutely revolting. . .

As though this torture of human stench were not enough, the Turks who had perhaps got used to it by now would stop us every now and then and start a new search for valuables on the prisoners - "Your money, your money," they kept saying, as if demanding a price for getting us out of the stench. This was repeated so many times and so often-even long after our last penny and valuable item had been collected - that its use as a delaying tactic was unmistakable. Word spread among all prisoners in Greek and we all started shouting "Help, help" repeatedly in English. The Turks got alarmed lest our voice reached the warships of the Allied Power in the port, and they started hitting us with their rifle butts with all their force. Their cursing certainly expressed their anger at our insubordination, because we continued shouting and kicking at them and telling them in Turkish that we would stop only if they took the shortest way out of this stench. The message got through, and it certainly awakened their sense of direction, because they took us through some narrow passages - we had to pass a single-file through them - and within minutes we were back in a more bearable atmosphere in a government and barracks building in the Turkish quarter of Smyrna. This incident of insubordination built up a tremendous spirit and morale among the prisoners.

We were driven into a small courtyard of the building and, for half an hour in that narrow space, we talked to one another, making jokes, ridiculing the Turks and reinforcing our morale and determination to resist as best we could, at least verbally. That concentration in a narrow yard of a bunch of prisoners who had just won a moral victory was just about the worst tactical error that the Turks could have

made. However, we couldn't have too much of a good thing because, soon after an officer arrived, we came to experience a concentration of the most despicable form. They piled all 306 of us—for that was our exact number as we had established during the preceding half-hour of moral stock-taking in the courtyard—into a nearby small hall. As more and more of us were pushed in and we felt absolutely packed like sardines, we started wondering whether the Turks intended to set fire to the building and burn us all. There were some high windows on one wall, which were fortunately open, but it would take some ingenuity to reach, let alone escape through them.

Our leader, a wonderful Greek and today still a good friend of mine who has asked not to be named in this paper, decided to play the game diplomatically. He conceived a pro-Kemalist slogan: "Long live Kemal Pasha" and followed it with some adjective or phrase like "the deliverer", or "the hero of Anatolia". As time passed and conditions became more hectic, however, the adjectives became more dubious rather than praiseworthy and on the approach of a guard we would all fall silent. The entire scene became so comical that I, for one, became totally distracted by the situation, forgetting that I was a prisoner under threat of torture and death. The expectation, or invention, of the adjective became the subject of such intensive thought and interest that I could honestly claim to have been happier there, as a prisoner, among people of courage and spirit, than I had been a free man on the Quay, living under constant fear among sheep. . .

The slogans we shouted after a while were definitely derogatory and the fact that we were now shouting them in Greek - and quite uncontrollably following them with hearty laughter to the extent that tears of happiness came to my eyes - must have conveyed the right message to the Turks. They started taking us out one by one, writing down our names and place of origin, and releasing us into the courtyard again. As a sign of approval, our leader now changed the language of the slogans back to Turkish and the adjectives became more complimentary. . . The lesson to the prisoners was unmistakable: through controlled, calculated and collective action, approving or disapproving their captor, they could have some control over his treatment of themselves. Personally, I also learned the great lesson that in situations of captivity of my body, I could, and I *should* always escape with my mind through abstraction and contemplation of intellectual tasks and happier situations. I had not and could not read Pavlov on the conditioning of the mind, but I had learned his theory through sheer experience - in captivity!

When my turn came to give my name, I invented a Greek name and gave Antalya as my place of origin. The Turkish officer looked me in the eyes to see whether I was telling the truth, but his attention was diverted I think, when he saw my excited face and freshly wiped eyes from the slogan shouting and laughter inside the hall. And that was another lesson for life: If you must tell a lie prepare a diversion to go with it. . . And by Jo, I really had to lie, because if my background and activities in Cilicia and the Armenian Prelacy had become known to the Turks, I would have never seen another day. I looked the officer straight in the eye and waived me on, half-smiling at first and then, remembering to keep his composure, shouting at me to pass on and looking at his soldiers to see whether anybody had detected his smile. I had obviously placed him in an awkward situation.

They now made us march to a large building turned into barracks, into which thousands of other prisoners had been brought before us. The condition of some of these prisoners was absolutely shocking and beyond human dignity. Hundreds

of them were lying on the sandy ground under the blazing sun, their clothing reduced to rags, no shoes, no hats - everything stolen by the marauding, greedy Turks. Many had been left with their shirt and pants and they advised us to tear apart the legs of our trousers before the Turks came to "borrow" them from us! We were also told that the only way to keep the Turks away from our shoes was to deliberately deface the shoes with tin. That was a small price I thought, remembering that in 1915 some Armenian mothers, with tears in their eyes, had marked the face of their daughters with tin, in order to save them from rape! Another curious tactic developed by the prisoners was to wear their trousers inside-out, to make them appear less desirable to the Turks! The most pitiable of all prisoners appeared to be the sons or fathers of wealthy families - always discernible by their delicate bodies and manners-whose more luxurious clothing had been removed to the bare pants, leaving their owners in highly vulnerable condition under the blazing sun.

The most precious thing removed by the Turks from these prisoners, however, was their morale. The guards were just about the roughest and the most sadistic Tchete irregulars in Kemal's Revolutionary Forces: Zeibeks from Aidin and mountainers from Anatolia, all of them motivated by revenge against the Greeks for having "attempted to conquer the Turkish fatherland", while in fact they were carrying out a mandate on behalf of the Allied Powers.

In addition to the rifles on their shoulder, these guards carried also a horrible kind of whip made of a bunch of dead wires, torn from some barbed wire fence. The sheer waving of their whip in the air would cause terror in the hearts of the prisoners.

Right in the middle of the exercise yard, a tap would be turned on to exude gurgling cold water. The poor prisoners were not only prevented from quenching their thirst, but under the threat of these whips, they would sadistically be pushed over the sunny side of the yard and made to pile onto each other along the wall. For hours they would be left there under the burning sun, crying with thirst, hungry and totally demoralized. The slightest movement in the mass of prisoners to rearrange themselves, so that the ones suffering most could be placed under the shade of the hardier, would invite the anger of the guards and the use of the whip.

The number of prisoners suffering from sun-stroke was beyond reckoning. I witnessed one prisoner going mad with thirst and rushing to the tap. Three guards caught up with him and he fell on the ground immersing his face into the muddy water pool, a couple of meters from the tap. He started to lap the dirty water while the guards started whipping him first on the body and then on the head. The mud on his body and face went red with blood and the guards still kept whipping him. The prisoners started shouting for help in Turkish and only when our leader shouted to the guards that their officers were coming, did the whipping stop. The poor prisoner had passed out. An officer arrived and ordered two other guards to carry the prisoner inside the barracks. We never saw him again.

I was trembling with rage and terror, but I was left agape when I was told that scores of prisoner had died under similar circumstances. Remembering the worst periods of Armenian history, I wandered whether the Persians, the Mamluks, the Seljuks or even the Mongols and Tartars of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, could have been more cruel to their prisoners than those Turkish guards. It seems to me

that no other nation could surpass the Turks in the conception and execution of sadistic torture.

When evening came and the cold breeze started to blow in from the sea, I thought the worst of that day was over. Our leader, however, had been told of yet another form of terror, which the Turks practised during the night. Half a dozen soldiers, marching as though carrying out an important mission, would approach our group and their officer would call out names of 2-3 prisoners. When they had presented themselves, the officer would tell them that the camp commandant wanted to see them. Surrounding the prisoners, the party would march to some far away tent where a search for arms or sharp objects would take place. The search would end up with the removal of all valuables and money and, on the order of the officer, the soldiers would use their bayonets to silently kill the prisoners. In the morning, corpses floating in the sea and visible from the camp would let the other prisoners know all about the fate of their comrades - and prepare for their turn.

As night fell, our leader passed the word as to the action he proposed to stop this butchery. When the 'death squad' appeared, all the prisoners in one voice would start calling the commandant to come out and see his 'brave' soldiers. This is what happened. The 'squad' officer came with his men and ordered the unit to march forward at first and then he cleverly ordered a "right wheel", and they started to march a course parallel to the wall of the yard and by the standing line of the prisoners along that moonlit wall. As he came to the end of the rectangular yard, he had to make a "left wheel", but this meant marching directly towards the prisoners. At this we started calling out "help" in English, then "Aidez-nous" in French, and finally "Aiuto" in Italian. As the squad approached, the three words became louder and, long before reaching the prisoners the officer made another "left wheel" and they started to walk parallel with the line of prisoners again, but in the opposite direction to the first line. We now started chanting "Hands off the prisoners" in Turkish. By this time, and after so many slogans, some senior Turkish officers in the main building were perceived to be putting on their lights and looking out. The "squad" officer saw the lights coming on all over the dark face of the building and immediately made a "left wheel" again to march away from the prisoners. He was now leading the 'squad' along a line which was far from the center of the yard, otherwise they would have to "negotiate" the water tap; but this would take them some distance away from their starting point. Nevertheless, so as to encourage them to march away from the line of prisoners, we now started chanting "Long live Kemal Pasha", and a powerful solo would add "The man in charge of the Revolution". After the second "Long live" the solo voice said "The man in control of his 'brave' soldiers". By this time the 'squad' had reached the dark wall of the yard and they hurriedly started to run towards their point of entry as silently as they could and obviously in great fear, lest they should be recognized by their superior officer looking down from above.

We couldn't help laughing at this turn of events, but our leader advised us to be prudent and, within seconds, the laughter stopped. There were no more 'death squad' visits for the rest of our time in those barracks, but we organized a prisoner alert with some of us undertaking guard duty in one-hour shifts. The older prisoners were particularly thankful for this, as they could now afford to get some sleep every night.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1922

Morale is definitely improving now among the prisoners and we are suffering fewer deaths - none from thirst, hunger, or the 'death squads'. Sun-stroke, however, continues to be the great killer and it is taking a lot of courage and self-sacrifice to organize the prisoners into "shade-and-protect" groups: 5 or 6 prisoners will sit in a row on the ground, turning their bodies and bending their heads down between their knees. This forms a wall with minimum individual exposure to the sun. The fellow suffering from sun-stroke will now lie in the shade protected by the line of sitting prisoners. The Zeibek guards watched this curiously at first, but when they saw that it was quite effective, they started getting uneasy. One of them was tempted to use his whip on the line of bare backs, but the whole camp of prisoners jumped up in a second and the chant of "Hands-off-the-prisoners" was shouted louder, until a senior officer came and took the guards away.

By similar tactics we also secured practically unlimited access to the water tap and better rations of food. All this, however, made the Turks resolve to get rid of this troublesome bunch of prisoners as soon as possible. While preceding groups had been kept for some time in this transfer camp before being taken to the interior of Asia Minor, in our case they organized our despatch within three days. Moreover, they included *everyone* of this troublesome bunch in their transfer, in order to avoid the tradition of active resistance through slogan chanting being passed on to succeeding groups of prisoners.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1922

Sometime after sunrise, about 9 o'clock I would guess, two Turkish officers came and ordered all those age 18 and under to stand up and form a line. While I was wondering as to what could be the purpose in separating people on the basis of age groups just before transfer to the interior of Asia Minor, I saw many of my fellow prisoners well above 18, stand up and join the line. "Obviously they think that something good is likely, or at least something less evil awaits the young", I thought and, automatically, I stood up and joined the line. One of the officers began to inspect these 'young' prisoners and as soon as he perceived a pretender, by virtue of height or because of a mustache, he would pull him out. He was rather cruel I thought with the latter, because he would pull the fellow out by the mustache. I rubbed my cheeks, knowing that a flushed appearance made me look more boyish. The officer seemed to be satisfied that I looked about 18 and passed on.

They now ordered us into double-file and took us inside the main building where we were told that the 'gracious' Mustapha Kemal had agreed with some sort of a committee arranging the evacuation of all those who wanted to leave Smyrna - a deadline of October 1st was mentioned - that all prisoners 18 and under should be set free. I couldn't believe this stroke of luck and for the last time I looked into the yard to see the prisoners. I almost felt guilty for "abandoning" them now, particularly as we started applauding and chanting "long live Mustapha Kemal Pasha".

We were ordered to march to the Quay, but our ordeal was not quite over. There was a mob outside, the majority being Turkish. . . women I was told by a friend nearby, and they started to ridicule and swear at us, shouting that we "deserve what we got" and "what was coming", and that "if we dared contemplate the 'liberation of St. Sophia and Istanbul, why couldn't we now save our own skin?" Somewhere in the first ranks of our line, however, some clever colleague started

shouting "Long live Kemal Pasha", and we all joined him and our loud chanting drowned out the ridicule of the mob.

We reached the Poonta on the Quay, where we were at last set free. We mixed with the thousands of refugees waiting there and we could not help noticing that no male under 50 was to be found among the crowd - obviously they had all been collected by the Turks. I saw some freight ships bearing the British flag and quite a few smaller Greek ships, including motor boats, and I was informed that all ships would take passengers to the nearby Greek islands of Mytilene, Chios, Lemnos, etc. I approached a line of people waiting for a boat and I was told that all captains had been strictly told to give priority to women, children and the elderly. At the head of the line, a Turkish soldier would allow a person to board a ship only on payment of a "para" (a Turkish denomination of money) or some valuable object. This demand was obviously arbitrary and the result of the Turkish acumen to extract a price for every step taken by "infidels" in or out of a land conquered by the Turk. I had no money or valuables and I therefore had to try and procure something before I attempted to board a ship.

At this point I should like to introduce the story of two older prisoners who had been left in the camp or barracks for transfer into the interior of Asia Minor.

Smpad Chorbajian and Vahan Korganian were two Armenians I met among the prisoners. The former, being also from the town of Tomarza, became a valued friend and advisor, particularly when we met again in Piraeus, where he told me the tragic sequel of that prisoner camp.

They were first taken to Magnesia and then to some obscure villages in the interior, always under forced march and always to unknown destinations along a route that made no sense other than the exhaustion of the prisoners to death. The guards made liberal use of the butts of their rifles, picking time and time again on some poor prisoner, until he would become unable to walk and, when he fell exhausted, they would finish him off with their bayonet.

A good half of the prisoners had perished by the time they reached Magnesia and the other half were suffering from dysentery, having drunk dirty water. The entire route was lined with corpses left by previous groups of prisoners and the stench was pretty unbearable.

Passage through a village or town was quite an ordeal, as Turkish civilians would line along the route, waving axes and the other weapons, 'buying' a prisoner from the guards for as little as a handful of dry figs and then proceeding to torture, mutilate and kill the poor fellow. The mob was particularly cruel to Greek or Armenian priests among the prisoners. Der Avak, the priest who had fetched the key of the rear door of the Prelacy during the siege in order to give us time to study the 'British soldiers' offer to liberate the besieged Armenians, had been left with - or rather opted to remain with - just his underwear. A Greek priest who considered that sort of attire beneath his dignity, however, paid very dearly with his life when some villager bought him for a piece of bread given to a guard.

When they had reached a little town where a "large warehouse with concrete floor was located" (they never discovered the name of that town), they were able to obtain some brown sacks and sleep on the floor. They had improvised a strange uniform by opening three holes near the bottom of a sack - one for the head and two for the arms - and for a change they were given a hot dish. It was mostly water with half a dozen chickpeas and they had all started to joke by competing as to who

could 'fish out' more chik-peas. Their ability to develop a morale in these circumstances was their only salvation.

An attack on the guards during the night succeeded and they had been able to throw away their 'sack uniform' and escape. Traveling by hiding by day and walking by night enabled them to reach Smyrna and board a ship to Piraeus.

If I may now return to my own story, I was contemplating various ways to procure a 'para' to pay the Turks in order to be allowed to board a ship, when I saw a barge loaded with some large bags. The shade cast by these bags looked so attractive that I could not resist the temptation to lie there for a while to get some rest. I have no idea how long I slept, but suddenly I was very rudely awakened by a soldier holding me by the shirt and asking a young Turkish civilian "Is this the fellow".

I had barely opened my eyes, when the Turkish soldier dropped me on the floor of the barge and getting hold of his rifle (mounted with bayonet) with both hands, he was getting ready to swing and kill me. Fortunately the young man pulled the soldiers rear hand and stopped him, saying - "No, no, it's not him". The soldier gave me a kick and they both left.

I rubbed my eyes and got up to look around me, still in a haze, and half-asleep. I couldn't believe my senses, not even the pain of the kick! Was it all a nightmare, perhaps? But there were the two turks walking together on the Quay, looking for a victim. I couldn't believe how near I had come to a horrible death, how cheap life had become, even if one were completely innocent. It seemed to me that a Christian and Armenian life in particular, had become less valuable than that of a fly for the Turks during those terrible days of September, 1922.

My heart was pounding more and more, as I kept thinking of this incident and, for a moment, I wondered whether myu bile had burst, because of the unexpected terror I had experienced. I ran to the Quay and started asking people for water. Somebody passed me a bottle and I drank all it contained. I then apologized to its owner for having finished the water and explaining my situation, I offered to go and fill the bottle again, if only he could tell me where the nearest tap was. "He" answered with a female voice that it was nothing and it certainly was not worth the risk. Looking carefully at the face talking to me I noticed that a false mustache made of black velvet glued to the upperlip, had very successfully transformed a female face to a masculine one. I sat down smiling and we started joking about her mustache and she told me that it was her elderly father's device for fooling the marauding Turks and save her from rape. I then got to know her father and her very young brother and we turned the conversation to Greek as soon as I heard their names. They came from Nacheli, a Greek village near Smyrna, and I told them of my "hilarious" adventures with the Greek prisoners. My Greek was far from adequate for this account and I often resorted to Turkish words and Maria, my new acquaintance, asked for explanations every now and then. Giving her the Armenian term was certainly no help, so I had to resort to pantomime, which made the entire conversation very lively and judging by the onlookers, certainly worth watching. As I kept telling them of more and more adventures, I couldn't help noticing a warmth developing in Maria's eyes and I thought her flushed, smiling face, even with that mustache, looked quite pretty and definitely very sexy. I lowered my voice saying that it might be dangerous to be telling all this with so many onlookers around. Finally, we agreed that we should try to board a boat together, pretending we were all one

family. I went to search for my hidden suitcase on the Quay and lo and behold, it was exactly where I had left it a week ago, quite intact and containing more than enough 'paras' for the whole family.

I changed my clothing and we joined the queue of people boarding a British freighter. Near the inspection point Maria also changed - by removing her jacket and mustache - just as she did when the Turks looked for males between 15 and 50 to collect as prisoners. She finally re-arranged her hair by removing her cap and I found myself looking at a stunning girl of only 18, she told me, which made my heart jump with excitement. We followed a family with no male member and in the dusk, it seems the inspectors considered us all one and the same large family. We hurried aboard the ship without looking at the inspectors.

We felt an enormous relief at having left Smyrna even though we were still in the port. People were squeezing themselves and their luggage just about anywhere they could find some space. We found a corner, sat down and struck a long conversation with a family nearby, while Maria and I exchanged secretive looks from time to time. At long last, the ship started to move and we all got up to look on a dark and utterly destroyed Smyrna for the last time. A whole civilization and an era seemed to have passed away there. . .

As we rearranged our luggage and laid down some blankets for sleeping, I noticed that Maria was setting things so that her elderly father and her young brother would sleep on one side of some covered piece of freight and the two of us could sleep on the other. She smilingly reminded me that we had intended to present ourselves as 'husband and wife' to the inspectors, in any case. A great feeling of love and excitement came over me and I went to wash myself - for the first time in two days. When I returned, they seemed to be all asleep and it was utterly dark because the old British freighter had no lights on the deck.

I laid down to sleep and when I had stopped moving for a while, I felt Maria's hand creeping onto my torso. Her caress was having the effect of fire falling on some dynamite - if you will forgive the warlike metaphor. I squeezed her hand into mine and sent my other hand in her direction. It landed on her bosom which felt very smooth and warm. Her hand started guiding mine and she whispered that she had been waiting for that moment ever since we had entered the ship. Our hearts were pounding and talking to each other through our movements and instinctively we turned towards each other and embraced in silence. First our lips and then our bare bodies touched and finally our limbs were entwined and we abandoned ourselves to the pleasures of pure love. Our lips, hands and hormones were expressing all our feelings towards each other and there was no need for words. Silence, stares, kisses and cuddles became more expressive than a thousand words.

From time to time, some baby would be heard crying somewhere on the deck, or somebody would get up to go to the washroom holding up a candle to find his way in the darkness. The two of us would then freeze or separate and feign sleep, until darkness was restored and we could impatiently reunite. These pauses served to rekindle our desire and prolong our pleasure until dawn, when we drifted into sleep, totally exhausted and utterly content.

A dream of several hours had come to an end, only to mark the beginning of a new life for me. Lying on my back in that absolutely euphoric state, I could not help reflecting on how suddenly my luck seemed to have taken a happy turn. Yesterday, I had been a wretched prisoner in tattered clothing and barely 12 hours

ago, I had been spared from the bayonet by a sheer miracle. A few hours later, here I was a free man on my way to a new life. And now, lying next to a woman I loved, I could not help but wonder as to how strange indeed, could the ways of life be. . .

II. *COURT EVIDENCE OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE HOLOCAUST OF SMYRNA PRESENTED AT THE FAMOUS TRIAL PITTING THE AMERICAN TOBACCO COMPANY VS. THE GUARDIAN ASSURANCE CO. LTD IN 1924.*

KRIKOR BAGHDJIAN

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

In September 1922, during the great fire of Smyrna, the American Tobacco Company, Ltd., lost all its property - worth over \$600,000 at the time - and applied to the Guardian Assurance Company, Ltd., for compensation. Other insured property lost in the same fire was valued at over \$100 million at the time, and the outcome of this case would therefore be of crucial importance to many insurance companies in London. The Guardian refused to compensate the ATC on the basis that the great fire of Smyrna was the consequence of war action - it had been started deliberately by one or the other of the warring parties, the Greeks or the Turks, and damage due to this kind of action according to a specific article of the insurance policy did not entitle the insured to receive compensation. American Tobacco sued the Guardian and the trial took place in the High Court of London under judge Rowlat. The following statement of evidence as to who set the fire, and why, was presented by KRIKOR BAGHDJIAN, an Armenian teacher, then aged 21, who fled to Piraeus, Greece after the fire.

G. ARMEN

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1922

Around 9 a.m. I was informed of the arrival of the attacking Turkish army under the nationalist leader Kemal, at the Bournabat area of Smyrna.

Some days ago, my father had gone to fight them and my mother and I decided to leave our home in the St. Nicholas Quarter of Smyrna and seek refuge at the Armenian club, situated on Rechidie street, near the Armenian Church. Some 40-50 people gathered, and at about noon we closed our door, despite the fact that small groups of Turkish cavalry passingby, shouted "Korkma, Korkma" (Have no fear). Our suspicions proved to be correct, because a short while later, while looking through the window and iron shutters onto the streets, I saw groups of Turkish soldiers stopping civilians and taking money and valuables from them. At about 4 p.m., I witnessed the killing of a Greek young man who said he had no money. By the time it grew dark, I had witnessed some 10-15 such murders. All civilians in the streets had to undergo bodily search with the exception of the Italians and the French* who wore distinguishing signs. At 5 p.m. a Catholic priest was seen guiding some Armenians to the French School of Smyrna and some 8-10 people in the club with us came out and joined the crowd led by the priest.

*N.B. These two nationalities were favored because their government had supplied arms to Kemal.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1922

I remained in the club until the afternoon hours and watched more civilians being robbed by Turkish soldiers outside. Jumping over the back wall of the club's backyard, I went into a rich Greek house. Judging by the newspaper lying around and the furniture, the two-storied house was deserted. A couple of friends joined me and we looked around for hiding places in case of emergency. I went back to the club after a couple of hours, while my two friends remained there.

Around 9 p.m., four armed Turkish infantrymen knocked on the door of the Club and, after some hesitation, we decided to open up. As a former employee of the Y.M.C.A. in Jerusalem, I had on my uniform bearing a distinguishing triangle on the arm and presented myself as an American. Two of the soldiers came in, while the other two stayed as guards at the door. I believe my presence as an American restrained the soldiers from any violence, but I was at a loss when some of the people in the club started begging the soldiers to leave them undisturbed. Suddenly, the soldiers drew their bayonets and asked everybody to pass over their valuables. As I did not move, one of the soldiers came towards me with his bayonet but I managed to keep cool and tell him in Turkish that I was an American, not an Armenian. He drew back without taking anything from me.

The gun shots continued through the night, although only few passers-by were seen from our windows. They were all stripped of their jackets or clothing and at least 8-10 of them were covered with blood pouring from bayonet wounds on their heads or their chests.

Everybody in the Club was searching for a good hiding place because, as the Turkish soldiers were leaving, one of them had been heard to say to the others: "This is a club and some undesirable elements are bound to be hiding here". I returned to the neighboring Greek house which, being on Moda Street parallel to Rechidie Street afforded a fairly clear view of the Prelacy gate from some suitable doors or windows. Through an opening between a door and its jamb - as wide as the hinges - I saw a machine gun by Turkish soldiers pointing in the direction of the Armenian Prelacy. There was no action for some 3-4 hours and as it was beginning to get really dark I returned to the Club. Suddenly I heard the machine gun fire and Turks shouting for the gate of the Prelacy to be opened, or everybody inside the church would be killed. The bells of the Armenian church were continuously ringing for help, but no help came. I followed all these events at a very close distance from my hiding place in the Greek house.

After a while I went to the roof of an adjoining house in the direction of Souzan street and heard the explosion of a hand-grenade near the steeple of the church. Immediately, flames were seen bursting up high and the machine gun started to fire again. I also heard guns firing from many directions and, in that pandemonium, I fell down flat near the roof of the neighboring shop forming a valley with the roof of the house. The attack lasted 20-30 minutes. Later, looking towards the Club from my hiding place, I saw some Turks knock on its door and shout threats. Some women opened the door and, when the Turks came out, they were carrying away a Greek woman and an Armenian girl of a very well-known family, aged 20-22. The girls, as well as the women inside the club, were screaming, but by the time I ran to the Club to show my Y.M.C.A. uniform and claim American protection for the girls,

the incident was over. The girls returned in the morning and their mothers later told me, in tears, that both girls had confessed to having been raped by two Turkish soldiers.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1922

In the morning, I got the courage to stand up fully erect on the roof to survey the area. I saw that most of the shops on Rechidie Street had been broken into and, just as I was looking around, Turkish soldiers were breaking up the frontage of the confectionary store at the corner of Rechidie street and Katardji, facing the Armenian Prelacy. Further along the street, a Turkish soldier holding up a ladie's stocking was complaining as to why on earth the store he had just robbed had no men's socks. . !

Later in the morning I walked onto the roof of a coffee-grinding shop through a communicating door from the roof of the Club. Looking into the interior from various openings, I saw some Turkish soldiers bringing in their loot from various shops, and I distinguished some sacks of rice, sugar and other types of edibles and some clothing merchandise. The conversation and jokes between the Turks made it all abundantly clear, that all this merchandise came from looted stores. The man in charge was a certain Suleiman Chavoush.

During the rest of the day the Turks continued to knock on doors, threatening to break into and kill everyone inside if a door were not opened and yet, without allowing time or chance for this to happen they would start to force a door open. The noise of shattering glass and splintering timber left no doubt of this, but I can not truthfully claim that I saw every single detail from my position on the roof.

The Armenian Club was searched several times during the day and I was not always available to display my Y.M.C.A. uniform to help minimize the looting. Many of the men staying in the Club had also taken to watching events in the surrounding streets from the presumed safety of the roof, with the result that the place was often unattended. When I got the chance to look into my baggage late in the day, I discovered that my violin had been stolen together with quite a few other valuables. Some women eyewitnesses testified that Turkish soldiers were responsible for all these thefts.

There were no attacks on the Armenian Prelacy at any time during this day.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1922

A great many more Turkish soldiers and civilians were to be seen today on the streets than ever previously. The looting appeared to be going on faster, as Turkish civilians were also helping, particularly with the transfer of goods to the coffee-grinding store adjoining the Club.

I gathered from friends and women staying in the Club that Turkish soldiers kept repeatedly searching the Club. Two characters, in particular those who on Sunday night had raped the Greek and Armenian girl, appeared to come and go when they pleased, drew their bayonets, threaten the poor parents and take the two girls to a neighbouring house on Rechidie street to lock themselves inside. After 10-15 minutes of screaming heard all over the neighborhood, the two girls would return in tears to the club.

I witnessed a rather tragic incident from the roof this morning. An Armenian lady passing by the Club was stopped by four Turkish soldiers and asked something which I could not hear from my position. She replied, "I am not

Armenian," but her accent betrayed her. They forced her onto the ground and each one started treading on her and threatening to kill her. The poor lady, seized with terror, was screaming like mad, while the four Turks were laughing. Eventually, they let her run away to safety.

I also saw 3-4 Turks armed civilians dragging two young men whose ethnicity I could not guess. Just as they turned the corner of Rechidie street two Turkish soldiers stopped them. After a brief conversation with the Turkish civilians I heard them say that the "prisoners" should be conducted to the police station. Suddenly, however, they snatched these "prisoners" from the hands of the civilians and pushed them into the confectionary opposite the coffee-grinding shop. Then I heard two shots from revolvers and saw the poor young men fall forward with their heads visible through the door of the confectionary.

Throughout the day, there was continuous noise and movement around the Armenian Prelacy in parallel with the looting of properties all around. The day ended and I still had not gathered the reason for this hurried activity by the Turks. (Later events indicated that the defenders of the Prelacy and agreed to terms to evacuate their position and the Turks were preparing to set fire to the entire Armenian Quarter as well as the Greek and European Quarters, as events turned out.)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1922

On the night of Tuesday into Wednesday, I returned to the Greek house behind the Club to look around for my friends and I saw that the furniture was now in miserable condition and everything had been turned upside-down. On seeing that the front door was broken and piano wrecked, I reached the conclusion that the house had been broken into and looted. I looked around for bodies fearing the worst for my friends, but, finding nothing, I returned to my hiding place on the roof. Two of my cousins together with two young girls were hiding up there and I joined them.

During the night we heard the noise of convoys of vehicles outside on at least three occasions. I also heard Turkish soldiers shouting presumably to Turkish civilians that they should no longer come into this quarters of the city. Each time a convoy of vehicles went by, I remember the shaking of the house in which we were hiding. But on the whole, the night passed quietly, far more quietly than the previous 3 or 4 nights.

At about 10 a.m. in the morning, I saw Turkish soldiers arrive at the Club to tell the women that they should accompany them to the Armenian Hospital within a few minutes. The Club was evacuated but my party of five decided to continue hiding up on the roof. I do not know what became of the women who departed with the soldiers, I never saw them again, except for my mother. She returned under the pretense that she wanted to take away a quilt for the night, but, in reality she just wanted to leave a message. Knowing our hiding place up in the roof of the building, she pretended to speak to herself, but loud enough to be heard by us, while she continued searching for a quilt. "Krikor, Krikor" she said, "you must now leave this place and get away, otherwise you will be burned to death. Continue to pretend you are an American". I saw her leave after finding her quilt and that was the last I ever saw of my mother. . .

My friends and I looked at each other knowingly, an absolute silence followed. For over an hour and a half we heard no movement except for the occasional footsteps of patrols in the street. I approached an opening in the wall to look outside and I

saw merchandise stacked all along Rechidie street - all sorts of import goods, furniture, chairs, clothing, bags and bags of sugar and cereals - with two guards sitting and talking. From my position I also counted 4-5 corpses lying in the street. The occasional patrols we heard were accompanied by carts meant to carry all this merchandise to some unknown destination.

At about noon, I saw them wheel in some barrels of petroleum. I did not see their content, but judging by their color and shape, they were identical to barrels of the "Petroleum Company of Smyrna". Each barrel was guarded by 2 or 3 Turkish soldiers and they were being carted all along Rechidie street, towards the Armenian Prelacy. I felt a chill on my spine as I realized the purpose of all these preparations. I also saw barrels being rolled in the direction of the other Armenian Club at Krya Vrissi at the far end of Rechidie Street. Other carts with barrels appeared every quarter of an hour. When all barrels were in position (200-300 m. apart), at the end of this operation, I heard what I can only describe as "sounds of rain falling on a roof".

My friends and I began to lose all hope of escaping from our hiding place. As we started looking for escape routes over various roofs around this hiding place, we felt drops falling on us, soldiers in the street below threw up the walls a liquid with buckets. As soon as I got the smell of this liquid from my wet clothes, I had no doubt it was petroleum.

As we were walking around the roofs, I saw a fire at Asmahane and, after a little while, I saw another starting further along Basmahane in the direction of the Armenian Hospital. Soon, the two fires joined and they appeared to advance towards the Armenian Prelacy. At about 6 p.m., I saw another fire behind the Prelacy from my position. Explosions started to be heard with increasing frequency as the fires flared anew, after surrounding a barrel in the street. By 8 p.m., the fires had spread to our block with the Greek house behind the Armenian Club being the first to flare up. Our position had become untenable and despite our fear of getting caught by the Turks further down the street, we came out from the house adjoining the coffee-grinding store at Souzan street; and we proceeded to Katirdji street, Greek hospital and other streets, not all of which I could note in our panic. We met students from the Providence Orphanage likewise being transferred to places of greater safety. We mixed with them and reached the garden of the French Consulate, where crowds of people escaping from the fire had already gathered.

Throughout our escape I saw numerous corpses and literally hundreds of looted shops. I shall never forget the panic we felt when the sounds of galloping horses were heard behind us and kept coming nearer and nearer. Just as I thought that our pursuer - probably Turkish cavalry - must be within range to strike us, I saw a horse, with no one mounting it, suddenly fall dead near the Greek Hospital. The poor animal had caught fire in patches over its side wet with petroleum on his body and it had been galloping madly around the streets.

In the garden of the French Consulate, people were estimating at least 48 hours for the fire to reach this block, but before daybreak, barely 6-7 hours later, we were alarmed to see it only a few blocks away. Wearing my Y.M.C.A. uniform, I guided my party of six into the street behind the French Consulate leading to the Quay. French marines were preventing non-French subjects from entering this route to the Quay and it was with great difficulty and some argument that we were allowed through, to reach the Quay by daybreak.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1922

The fire advanced all morning and in effect separated the Quay into two parts by enveloping the buildings near the French Consulate. My party and I proceeded towards the Poonta, where detachments of Allied Forces were despatching boats bearing their subjects towards their ships.

Every now and then, Turkish cavalry detachments galloped along the route behind the Quay shouting "Armenians burned our Smyrna," and looking for Armenians. I saw a few being caught and taken to the interior. I do not know their fate.

At 4 p.m. I saw the Director of the Y.M.C.A., Mr. Jacob, distributing what I assumed were priority numbers for embarkation. Stepping forward in my Y.M.C.A. uniform, I asked for a number for my party. Mr. Jacob promised to take me with him. Later, we stepped into a boat, but so many people came in after us that it started to sink. Some people were drowned, but I managed to get hold of a rope and, jumping from boat to boat, I reached the Quay.

I felt very thirsty after this adventure and I saw a broken water pipe in the burned building across the street. As I approached, I saw five armed Turkish civilians and a soldier killing Armenians. I forgot my thirst at the sight of this incident and feeling it was too late to do anything to save them, I returned to the Quay. On the way I heard my father's voice somewhere in the crowd and I found him. I started looking for Mr. Jacob when an unarmed Turkish soldier approached me with an offer of a passage to one of the "waiting" ships in the port, if I paid him 5 Ottoman Pounds. As I was searching for money in my pockets, a Christian boatman approached from the sea and suddenly, several Turkish soldiers hiding by jumped up and pointing their rifles at the boatman, ordered him to approach the Quay. A number of people waiting by, including my father and myself, were helped into the boat by the soldiers, once due payment had been collected.

The boatman rowed towards an Italian merchant ship the name of which was not legible from our direction of approach. At long last we reached its side, but, to our horror, we saw the rope ladder being pulled up. Two of us climbed up the side of the ship and I caught the ladder. Two people caught hold of my legs and we were hung up in the air for a while looking down I saw the boatman jump onto a row boat passing by, leaving all his passengers to their fate. I started to loose my grip because of the weight of people hanging from my legs, but my father pushed them up from the boat as it reached the top of a wave and I secured a better grip. More boat passengers started to climb up the side of the ship and finally, Italian seamen helped us all reach the deck. We all lay exhausted on our backs, breathing and looking at the reddening evening sky, as we thanked our lucky stars for having finally made it - to safety and freedom. . .